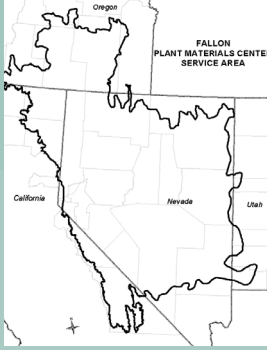


# Great Basin Plant Materials Center

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

November 2006



## FACTS ABOUT THE GREAT BASIN PLANT MATERIALS CENTER

### **Mission Statement:**

Specialize in the collection, testing, and selection of native and adapted plant materials, cultural practices, and restoration and rehabilitation methods for resource concerns of the Great Basin.

The Great Basin PMC is the newest plant materials center, bringing the number of PMC's nationwide to 27.

The Great Basin PMC service area covers approximately 139,000 square miles, almost 89 million acres, in four states: Nevada, Oregon, California, and Utah.

### **More information can be found at:**

[www.nv.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.nv.nrcs.usda.gov)  
[Plant-Materials.nrcs.usda.gov](http://Plant-Materials.nrcs.usda.gov)

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## Ground Breaking Ceremony Held at Great Basin PMC

A ground breaking ceremony was held Aug. 9, 2006 at the site of the new PMC in Fallon, Nev. U.S. Senator Harry Reid was the keynote speaker. Other featured speakers included U.S. Congressman Jim Gibbons; USDA Under Secretary Mark Rey; NRCS State Conservationist Richard Vigil; College of Agriculture Dean David Thawley; Kevin Kirkeby representing U.S. Senator John Ensign; Steve Robinson representing Governor Kenny Guinn; BLM State Director Ron Wenker; Ed Monnig, U.S. Forest Service; State Forester Pete Anderson; Department of Agriculture Director Don Henderson; and Churchill County Commissioner Norman Frey.



U.S. Senator Harry Reid speaking at the PMC ground breaking ceremony



Soil conditioner is used for seedbed preparation

## New Equipment for the PMC Helps Get the Job Done

Equipment needs for the Great Basin PMC have been prioritized, and many items have been ordered. Several large items have arrived at the PMC, including a soil conditioner (*pictured left*), disc and rotary motor. A tractor and seed drill have been ordered and should arrive this winter. It is anticipated that most of the essential equipment for the PMC will be delivered by early spring.

## Historic Buildings Being Reviewed by Archeologist

We are currently awaiting the results of an archeologist's cultural resources report on the existing structures located on the PMC. The report will indicate where new construction can occur. A bid package is being developed and, after results of the cultural resources report are known, the package will be advertised.

Priorities for construction include an equipment building/shop, equipment cleaning pad, fueling station, chemical storage building and petroleum product storage building.



Historic building at the entrance of the PMC and is currently being used as a temporary office

# Great Basin Plant Materials Center

## 2006 Projects

### Poplars Tested as Source for Biofuels

The first plant trial on the new Great Basin PMC was underway on June 28, 2006 when more than one thousand poplar cuttings were planted. The purpose of the study is to evaluate 58 poplar varieties and select the varieties that are most suitable for biofuel production. Cooperators include University of Nevada Cooperative Extension and GreenWood Resources, Inc. The project is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Energy to GreenWood Resources, Inc., a poplar tree farm Management company out of Portland Oregon.



A poplar tree in the early stages of growth



A tractor pulling a seed drill for planting

### Stabilizing Soil On Abandoned Cropland

Population growth in Nevada has increased water demand for urban development. As a result, water has been diverted from cropland to urban areas as water rights have been sold to cities and developers. Water transfers have resulted in abandoned cropland that is highly susceptible to erosion.

The Great Basin PMC, in cooperation with University of Nevada Cooperative Extension and the Lahontan Conservation District, have implemented a study to investigate grass, forb and shrub species that can effectively stabilize soils on abandoned cropland.



Demonstration planting in Gardnerville's Herbig Park

### Conservation Demonstration Planting in Gardnerville's Herbig Park

A demonstration planting was established at Herbig Park in Gardnerville, Nev. Cooperators on the project include the Great Basin PMC, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension, Douglas County Parks and Recreation Department and Carson Valley Conservation District. The project will be accessible to the public and will demonstrate the plant species that can be used to address conservation concerns. Additionally, the planting will be evaluated to determine the performance of each species in the soil and climate conditions present at the site.



Cheatgrass (*above*) increases risk of wildfires

### Cheatgrass Displacement Being Studied

Cheatgrass die-off has been observed in many areas where it had previously been the dominant plant species. The Great Basin PMC, in conjunction with the Bureau of Land Management and University of Nevada Cooperative Extension, will begin a study to examine plant species that can establish in areas where cheatgrass die-off has occurred and prevent the reestablishment of cheatgrass in the future. Planting for the study is scheduled for mid November.